

# Evaluation of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Workplace Skills Initiative: What and Why?

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# Goals of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Workplace Skills Initiative

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- Increase basic workplace skills of incumbent, emerging, and dislocated workers
- Pilot a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Workplace Skills Certificate
- Contribute to knowledge about delivery of workplace skills education and build capacity of Indiana's workplace basic skills educators
- Improve competitiveness of Indiana employers (reduced turnover, increased productivity)

**Note:** Increase and Improve imply pre- and post-intervention measurement.

# Target Populations (3)

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## Employers

Higher-skilled workforce  
Improved competitiveness  
Improved hiring decisions

## Workers

More skills → higher earnings  
                    ↘ self-esteem  
Valued credential (certificate)

## Basic Skills Educators

Best practices  
Increased capacity

# 2 Types of Evaluation

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## ☐ Process

- 8 operational dimensions
- Perceptions
- Audience: Program managers and state

## ☐ Outcome

- Consistent measures of progress
- Comparison group methodology (?)
- Audience: Program funders

# Process Evaluation: Operational Dimensions

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- ☐ Employer recruitment and commitment
- ☐ Curriculum and instruction
- ☐ Facilitation of and barriers to worker participation
- ☐ Institutional setting and governance structure of project
- ☐ Communication (within and external)
- ☐ Monitoring and continuous improvement
- ☐ Resource adequacy
- ☐ Technical assistance from DWD staff

# Process Evaluation: Sources of Data

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- ☐ Proposals (1)
- ☐ Work Plan and Progress Reports (4)
- ☐ Telephone Interviews (Project Manager)
- ☐ Site Visits (1 or 2)

# Process Evaluation: Site Visit Report Outline

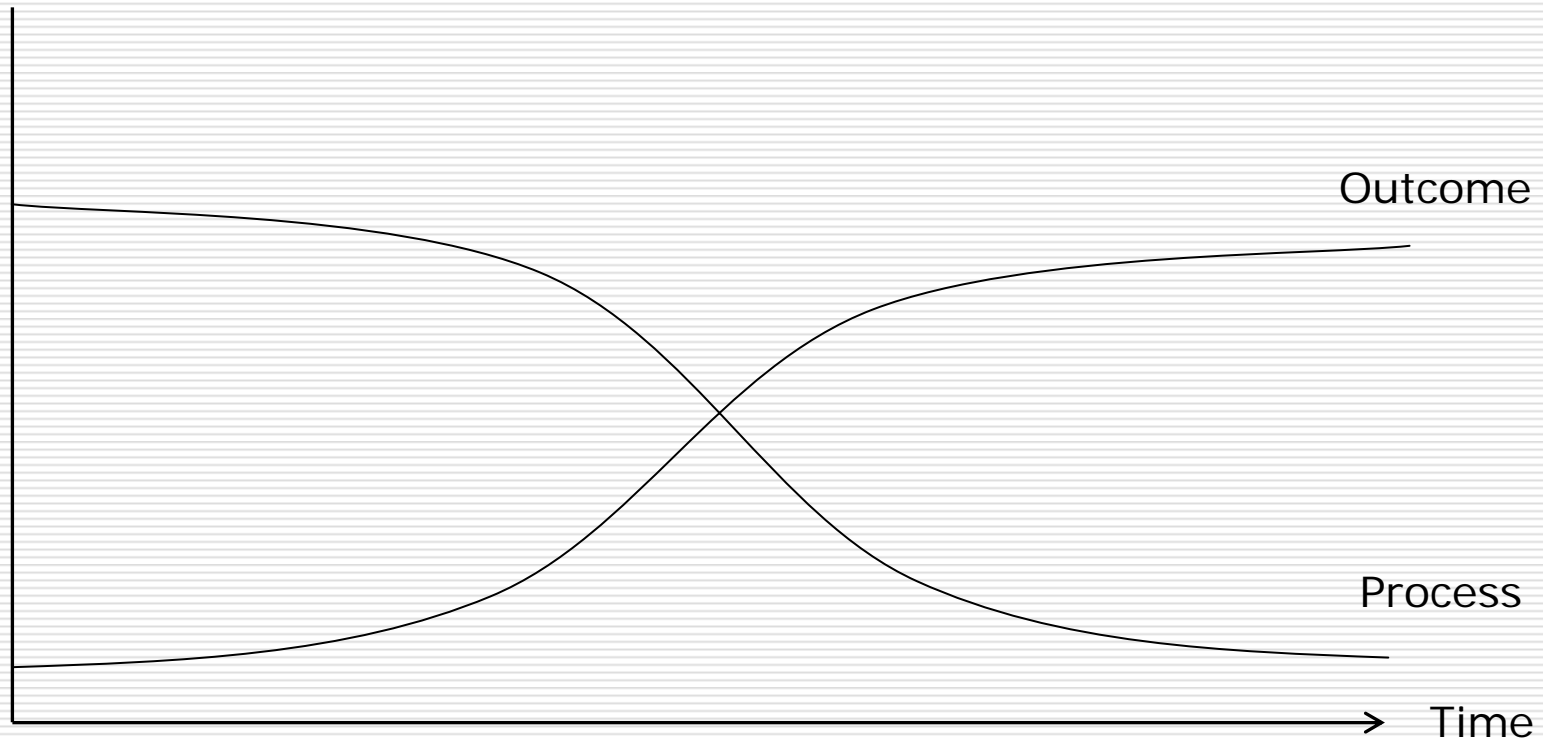
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- ☐ Site description
- ☐ Project description
- ☐ Training decision making
- ☐ Employer recruitment and commitment
- ☐ Participant recruitment and engagement
- ☐ Successes
- ☐ Issues or Concerns
- ☐ Evaluation of process

# Evaluation Plan

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Resources/effort





# Outcome Evaluation

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## ☐ Questions:

1. Did training intervention lead to positive outcomes?
2. What approach(es) seem to lead to most positive outcomes?

## “Theory”

Effectiveness depends on worker characteristics and training characteristics.

# Outcome Evaluation: Sources of Data

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- ☐ Project (Intake forms, assessments, training records, customer satisfaction/evaluations)
- ☐ State administrative data
- ☐ Participant surveys

All of these will be used to construct an Access database that will support summary reports and analyses

# Outcome Evaluation

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## Variables

<u>Effectiveness (outcome)</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>State Admin</u>	<u>Participant</u>
Post-training assessment of skill levels (level)	X		
Post-training minus pre-training (changes)	X		
Attainment of certification	X		
Quarterly earnings trend		X	
Public assistance (?)		X	
Self-esteem/locus of control (changes)			X
Promotion/training			X
Educational aspirations			X
Occupational aspirations			X

# Outcome Evaluation

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## Variables

<u>Worker Characteristics</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>State Admin</u>	<u>Participant</u>
Age	X		
Educational background	X(?)		X(?)
Occupation	X(?)		X(?)
Tenure	X(?)		X(?)
Marital/Family status	X(?)		X(?)
Language	X(?)		X(?)
Race/ethnicity	X(?)		X(?)

# Outcome Evaluation

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## Variables

<u>Training Characteristics</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>State Admin</u>	<u>Participant</u>
Type of training (modalities, intended hours, instructor, etc.)	X		
Participant hours	X		X
Learner attitude/motivation(?)	X(?)		X(?)
Support services available	X(?)		X(?)

# Outcome Evaluation

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## Issues/Concerns/Unanswered Questions

1. Attribution – How can we be sure that training is effective? (Pre-post is not rigorous enough)

Preliminary thoughts

- (i) With-in company analysis (assumes: broad assessment)

Assessed as low-skill; Participate ①	Assessed as “nearly” low-skilled; don’t participate ③
Assessed as low-skill; <u>don’t</u> participate ②	

① vs. ②

① vs. ③

- (ii) Across company analysis (comparison group)

# Outcome Evaluation

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## Issues/Concerns/Unanswered Questions

2. Interaction of Training Characteristics and Worker Characteristics
  - What works best differs by worker characteristic

# Outcome Evaluation

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## Issues/Concerns/Unanswered Questions

### 3. Standard Intake Form and Cooperation Agreements

#### 21ST CENTURY WORKPLACE SKILLS INITIATIVE EVALUATION PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT

*The purpose of this document is to ask workers for their permission to provide test data for an evaluation study to evaluators who are working for the State of Indiana. The evaluators work for an organization called the Upjohn Institute. Staff from that institute may contact workers in the future with surveys about workplace training and satisfaction with that training.*

*Please read and sign the agreement.*

1. I understand that the company that I am working for is participating in a program that is called the 21st Century Workplace Skills Initiative that is being evaluated.
2. I understand that I will be given a test of workplace skills now and once again in the future.
3. I understand that I may be offered training in workplace skills.
4. I agree to provide general, non-sensitive information about my job and educational background by completing surveys and participating in small group interviews conducted by the evaluator over the next 18 months.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_



# Value of Evaluation

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- ☐ Not evaluating individual grantees against each other
- ☐ Should be useful management tool when general findings are disseminated (TA Conferences scheduled in 10/06; 4/07; and 10/07)
- ☐ Should provide information to state (and other states) that can be used in funding decisions